GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3040
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2003
WHO ASSISTANCE TO HIV/TB PATIENTS
AMBATI BRAHMANAIAH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have accepted the WHO`s suggestion to supply anti-TB & HIV drugs free of cost to all the HIV and TE patients;

(b) if so, whether WHO has offered any financial help

(c) whether any seminar was organized by WHO in Geneva in this regard;

(d) if so, whether any Indian representatives from NACO were present in the Seminar; and

(e) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a): The Government of India is already providing free anti-TB drugs to all HIV and TB patients under the National TB Contro programme in all public sector hospitals. However anti-HIV drugs are not provided free of cost for the treatment of such patients under the National AIDS Control Programme in view of the prohibitive cost of such therapy and indefinite period of treatment, though it is provided for prevention of parent to child transmission and for post-exposure prophylaxis.

(b): No, Sir.

(c) & (d): Yes, Sir. The third Global TB/HIV working group meeting was organised in Montreux, Switzerland in this regard from 4-6th June 2003, which was attended by Additional Project Director, NACO and Deputy Director General (TB) Directorate General o Health Services.

(e): The recommendations of the Working Group were:

- Countries beginning HIV/TB interventions should first carry out situation analysis. Asia should expand HIV/TB coverage and address constraints in the implementation of the programme;
- The Global TB/HIV Working Group can give technical support to countries;
- HIV/TB intervention should not be considered as a separate intervention but a part of on-going National programmes;
- At the National level a Joint Coordinating Body on HIV/TB co-infection should be established for better coordination among various stakeholders;
- HIV/TB dual epidemic and its management should be the agenda for World Health Assembly 2004;
- Research priorities in the field of HIV/TB operations research should be prioritised by the countries;
- Surveillance for HIV in TB programme should be strengthened and voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) services for TB patients should be made available;
- Cotrimoxazole preventive treatment (CPT) for HIV/TB patients should be considered in order to reduce morbidity and mortality in such patients;
- ARV treatment for HIV/TB patients needs to be considered;
- Isoniazid prophylactic treatment (IPT) should be considered for HIV positive individuals detected at voluntary counseling and testing centres.